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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/620,560	07/17/2003	Ming-Chi Liaw	MERCK-1923D1	9252
23599	7590	04/12/2005	EXAMINER	
MILLEN, WHITE, ZELANO & BRANIGAN, P.C. 2200 CLARENDON BLVD. SUITE 1400 ARLINGTON, VA 22201			OLSEN, ALLAN W	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			1763	

DATE MAILED: 04/12/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/620,560

Applicant(s)

LIAW ET AL.

Examiner

Allan Olsen

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --
Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 16 December 2004.
2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 13-23 is/are pending in the application.
4a) Of the above claim(s) _____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
6) ☒ Claim(s) 13-23 is/are rejected.
7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 17 July 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☒ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
a) ☒ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☒ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. 09/151,181.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).
* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3) ☒ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date 7/17/2003.
4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. _____
5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6) ☐ Other: _____

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DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

Claims 13, 15, 16, 18-20, 22 and 23 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by Ohnishi et al. in EP 0618612A2 (hereinafter, Ohnishi).

Ohnishi teaches using a solution comprising H₂SO₄, H₂O₂ and a fluorine-containing compound, including HSO₃F and HF, to clean organic and inorganic residue from a semiconductor substrate. Ohnishi teaches removing sidewall residue after etching the substrate through a photoresist mask (figure 7a). Ohnishi teaches conducting a 5-10 minute cleaning process while maintaining the temperature between 80° and 130° C (column 8, lines 5-13). Ohnishi teaches conditions that result in the substrate being etched at a rate of under 0.1 nm/min (figure 5).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

This application currently names joint inventors. In considering patentability of the claims under 35 U.S.C. 103(a), the examiner presumes that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made absent any evidence to the contrary. Applicant is advised of the obligation under 37 CFR 1.56 to point out the inventor and invention dates of each claim that was not commonly owned at the time a later invention was made in order for the examiner to consider the applicability of 35 U.S.C. 103(c) and potential 35 U.S.C. 102(e), (f) or (g) prior art under 35 U.S.C. 103(a).

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Claims 14, 17 and 21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Ohnishi.

The above noted teachings of Ohnishi are herein relied upon.

Ohnishi does not teach:

1. the type of photoresist resist as being one of a g-line, i-line, Deep-UV, e-beam or X-ray;
2. removing photoresist while the operation pressure is maintained at 1 atm;
3. an H_2SO_4 : (HF + H_2O_2) ratio of 3:1.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to apply the method of Ohnishi to one of a g-line, i-line, Deep-UV, e-beam or X-ray photoresist because Ohnishi is directed to the removal of a generic photoresist and the types of photoresist recited in claim 14 include the most common types of photoresist that were use at the time of Ohnishi's disclosure.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to carry out the method of Ohnishi while maintaining a pressure of 1 atm because when a reference is completely silent on a parameter such as pressure, the skilled artisan would assume that the ambient pressure is used. If Ohnishi intended the method to be carried out at anything other than 1 atm the skilled artisan would expected that this to be disclosed. In the absence of such a discloser it would be obvious to operate at a pressure of 1 atm.

It would have been obvious to one skilled in the art to optimize the process with regard to the ratio of the components in the cleaning solution because Ohnishi teaches that a composition ratio is a cause-effective variable.

"Normally, it is to be expected that a change in temperature, or in concentration, or in both, would be an unpatentable modification. Under some circumstances, however, changes such as these may impart patentability to a process if the particular ranges claimed produce a new and unexpected result which is different in kind and not merely degree from the results of the prior art... such ranges are termed "critical ranges and the applicant has the burden of proving such criticality... More particularly, where the general conditions of a claim are disclosed in the prior art, it is not inventive to discover the optimum or workable ranges by routine experimentation."

In re Aller 105 USPQ 233, 255 (CCPA 1955). See also *In re Waite* 77 USPQ 586 (CCPA 1948); *In re Scherl* 70 USPQ 204 (CCPA 1946); *In re Irmischer* 66 USPQ 314 (CCPA 1945); *In re Norman* 66 USPQ 308 (CCPA 1945); *In re Swenson* 56 USPQ 372 (CCPA 1942); *In re Sola* 25 USPQ 433 (CCPA 1935); *In re Dreyfus* 24 USPQ 52 (CCPA 1934).

Additionally, concentration limitations are obvious absent a showing of criticality.

Akzo v. E.I. du Pont de Nemours 1 USPQ 2d 1704 (Fed. Cir. 1987).

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed December 16, 2004 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive. Applicant argues that Ohnishi does not teach removing photoresist sidewall residue after "drywall" etching of a semiconductor wafer. Applicant asserts that Ohnishi only describes the washing of residue from the surface of a substrate. With respect to newly added claims 22 and 23, applicant also argues that Ohnishi is especially irrelevant because his fluorine-containing compounds contain cations having a valence of other than +1.

In response, the examiner calls applicant's attention to figure 7a, which clearly depicts the removal of sidewall residue. With respect to the claims 22 and 23, the

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examiner notes that Ohnishi supplies fluorosulfuric acid, HSO_3F , to the cleaning solution. Fluorosulfuric acid is a monoprotic acid that dissociates according to the following reaction:



As this dissociation reaction shows, fluorosulfuric acid consist of a +1 cation (H^+), and a -1 anion (SO_3F^-). As such Ohnishi's fluorine-containing compound meets the limitation of claims 22 and 23.

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire **THREE MONTHS** from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within **TWO MONTHS** of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the **THREE-MONTH** shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than **SIX MONTHS** from the mailing date of this final action.

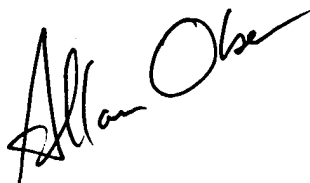
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Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Allan Olsen whose telephone number is 571-272-1441.

The examiner can normally be reached on M-F 1-5.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Parviz Hassanzadeh can be reached on 571-272-1435. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Allan Olsen", is written over a light gray, stylized signature watermark.

Allan Olsen
Primary Examiner
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